

Remarks

Applicant submits that the above amendments overcome the examiner's objections under 35 U.S.C. §112(2).

The examiner has rejected each of the claims as obvious in light of Hart et al. But Hart merely shows that packets using different higher-level addressing conventions can be forwarded by encapsulating the packets in a common lower level protocol (e.g., Ethernet or IEEE 802.3), mapping the higher-level address to a data link address, and then forwarding the packet based on the lower level data link address. Thus, unlike the present invention, Hart's scheme ignores the different protocol addresses when doing the actual forwarding. Hart doesn't perform multiple protocol routing any more than a copper wire carrying data formatted in two protocols performs multiple protocol routing.

The claims require more. In claim 1, packets which include "address information conforming to two different addressing conventions" are routed "using the addresses in the user data packets", not (as in Hart) by converting the addresses to a different addressing convention and then forwarding based on the new addresses. In fact, the last paragraph of claim 1 explicitly eliminates the possibility of address mapping.

Claim 5 discusses the use of encapsulation, a concept which appears in Hart. But unlike the Hart scheme, in claim 5 the routing protocol determines whether to encapsulate a packet, where to perform the encapsulation, and which protocol suite to encapsulate in. In contrast, Hart's scheme always encapsulates

packets in the same protocol suite, and always at the same location(s). Thus Hart neither teaches or suggests automatically determining when, where, and how to encapsulate.

Claim 21 describes a technique by which a router/bridge (a device capable of acting as a bridge or a router) can determine whether to act as a bridge or a router when forwarding a particular packet. Hart is clearly irrelevant to this claim since Hart does not even approach the problem of determining when such a device should act as a bridge or a router.

Finally, claim 23 describes a network in which routers which handle two different addressing schemes exchange common control packets. Clearly, Hart's scheme does not exchange control packets of this type.

Drawing Objection

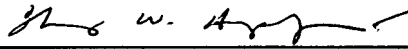
Although the examiner has indicated a general objection to the drawings, applicant is unable to determine which drawing is objectionable or which requirement of MPEP 608.02 or 37 C.F.R. has been transgressed, and so applicant is unable to comply at this time.

In light of the foregoing, it is submitted that all claims are allowable, and a notice of allowability is requested. If, on examining this application, the examiner feels that a TELEPHONE CONFERENCE would helpfully advance prosecution, the examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Applicant is enclosing a check for \$212.00 for the 7 excess claims and 1 excess independent claim added by the above amendment. Please apply any charges not covered by this communication, or any credits, to Deposit Account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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